



BIRKENHEAD SCHOOL

Curriculum

The curriculum is the means by which the School achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives. We emphasise the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.

Our curriculum is the sum total of all of the experiences that we plan for students. It includes timetabled lessons, assemblies and Chapel services, sporting fixtures, choir tours, private study, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, careers interviews, drama productions, visits to galleries, musical productions, form tutor time, science clubs, the School Council and everything else that we do. In short, the curriculum encompasses the three main 'Pillars' on which our school stands – the Academic, the Pastoral and the Co-Curricular.

The Curriculum works at its best only with help and support from students and their parents. To experience the breadth of what we offer, pupils need to develop real commitment – to lessons, homework, teams and school life as a whole.

The wide range of off-timetable activities on offer means that even the youngest students have some choice in what they do, although we do ensure that up to the end of Year 8, all pupils follow a common timetabled curriculum. Older students are offered increasing flexibility as their interests and talents become clear.

Our curriculum is in part based upon the enthusiasms and talents of our teachers – which is why we take advantage of our independence to offer something we consider to be superior to the National Curriculum. Inevitably what we do has evolved over the years to cater for the needs of academic children – but we try to offer something a little bit different each year.

Our curriculum, both on and off the timetable aims to:

Be enjoyable

Instil a thirst for learning for its own sake

Respond to pupils' individual learning needs

Keep pupils challenged

Encourage pupils to explore new things and develop a breadth of knowledge and understanding

Nurture talents, creativity and independence

Help to develop the skills for learning that pupils will continue to use throughout their lives including the linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic

Enable pupils to achieve the qualifications they need to pursue their dreams with the best results they are capable of

Actively encourage pupils to play a full part in the life of their school, and begin to recognise their role in local, national and the world communities

Develop respect, tolerance and understanding of others and the sensitivity, wisdom and moral courage to do what is right

We often talk of the “3R”s – Respect, Responsibility and Resilience to encapsulate the qualities and attitudes we seek to develop in students.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Our School fully supports the principle that young children learn through play and by engaging in well planned, structured activities.

Our Foundation Stage curriculum planning focuses on the EYFS areas of learning and development:

Prime areas of Learning

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Specific areas of learning

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and design

Teachers in the Foundation Stage use a baseline assessment to record the skills of each of the children. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child.

In our curriculum planning, we highlight these skills so that the children’s progress in all these areas can be identified and monitored. All areas of the EYFS contribute to a child’s progress and our school believes that all children need to experience and develop each of these skill areas in order to develop their true potential.

Tom Whitworth 8th September 2017. To be reviewed September 2018